



Winter 2001  
Volume 1, Issue 1

## Inside This Issue

**1** HUB Mini Forum

**1** In the Spotlight

**2** Let It Be Known

**3** HTE Tips

**3** Special Events

**4** Noteworthy

**4** Suggestions?

Cyd V. Grimes, C.P.M.  
Travis County Purchasing Agent

Travis County  
Commissioners Court

County Judge Sam Biscoe

Pct. 1 Comm. Ron Davis  
Pct. 2 Comm. Karen Sonleitner  
Pct. 3 Comm. Todd Baxter  
Pct. 4 Comm. Margaret Gomez

Travis County Purchasing Office  
314 West 11th Street, Suite 400  
Austin, Texas 78701  
(512) 473-9700

# Travis County Purchasing Quarterly

Dear Readers,

First of all, let me say Happy New Year to everyone! Your Purchasing Newsletter is back and better than ever. On a quarterly basis, you will be receiving this newsletter that will be filled with noteworthy and helpful information. We will be highlighting Purchasing Office staff and Purchasing Liaisons to give you insight into the dedicated people that work for you. Also, included will be a calendar of events as it relates to our Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Program. Here in the Capital of Texas, we have a very diverse society, and diversity plays a great part in the procurement process. We will discuss a diverse range of issues from payments to Bonding, and provide helpful tips on using HTE, so stay tuned and please let us know how you like your newsletter.

—Cyd V. Grimes, C.P.M., Travis County Purchasing Agent

## Monumental Mini Forum A Success

By Jorge Talavera

Travis County held its first Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Mini Forum on November 8, 2000, with Pct. 1 Commissioner Ron Davis as the keynote guest speaker. The event brought together HUB vendors and Travis County Buyers in an effort to increase the dialogue between the County and the business community. The forum was held at the Transportation and Natural Resource Satellite1 office on Johnny Morris Road.

Cyd V. Grimes, Travis County Purchasing Agent, commenced the mini-forum by praising Travis County's commitment to the HUB program.

"We are very fortunate in this County, we have really dedicated people, like the Commissioners Court and staff...we are a very diverse society today and they want that to be carried out in the business practices of our office," said Grimes.

Davis addressed a crowd of approximately 40, stating that the County personnel's presence exemplified what a "high point" it was for Travis County to ensure the continuing progress of the HUB Program. "This is the first HUB

See Forum on Page 4

## In the Spotlight Jerome Pilgrim

By Jorge Talavera

Jerome Pilgrim has been a Buyer for Travis County for nearly seven years, purchasing everything from road materials to EMS helicopters. He came to the County from Capital Metro, where he was a Buyer for eight years, procuring for the agency's Maintenance, Repair and Operations



Division. He has since managed to build a reputation as a smart worker; he knows his business.

I had the opportunity to sit down with Jerome to discuss various aspects of being a Buyer at Travis County. Working with the internal staff and the external business community is Jerome's favorite part of his job. "I like wheeling and dealing...with the big boys," he admits. Asked about his least favorite part of the job, he tucks his arms and responds, "Hmmm, that's a hard question," he grins, then says

See Spotlight on Page 2

Spotlight • Continued from Page 1

emphatically, "It's all good!"

Jerome says he has had many more good days than bad ones on the job. He suddenly smirks as if hit with a clever idea and says, "It's a really good day when the Commissioner's Court approves all my procurements on consent!"

Jerome goes on to explain the dynamics of purchasing for the County. "It's a dualfold situation...We have a goal to get the most bang for our buck and to save the taxpayers money, but at the same time make sure that the contracts are fair to the business community."

"Jerome always has the customer in mind and a good buy in mind and he marries the two very well," says Frank Holder, Assistant Purchasing Agent for Travis County.

Jerome feels that knowledge of the technical aspects of public purchasing must be a Buyer's solid foundation. Being people-oriented, open-minded and flexible are helpful when dealing with obstacles, in his opinion.

Just as Buyers encounter obstacles in the procurement process, so do vendors. Some businesses are unaware that they can even do business with the County, while others perceive it to be complex or difficult.

Jerome advises businesses not already registered with the County to inform themselves and then become available vendors by going through the process outlined in the graphic above.

Although the process is relatively simple, many businesses do not utilize the opportunity to do business with Travis County, particularly Historically Underutilized Businesses or HUBs.

The Travis County Purchasing Office has made a commitment to give HUBs a fair and equal opportunity to participate in the procurement process by setting a goal of awarding 30% of all procurement dollars to HUBs.

As an advocate of this initiative and previous HUB owner, Jerome highly encourages HUBs to become certified. Businesses can become certified as a HUB, M/WBE, or DBE, with the State

1. Complete a Travis County Bidders Application to get placed on the electronic system, or the County vendor database known as HTE. This will make your business accessible to the Travis County Purchasing Office.
2. Make an appointment to speak with a buyer, a step that is often overlooked. This will help to establish a rapport with buyers so that they are familiar with your business.
3. Get to know the departments within the County so that you are aware of the various needs for products and services.
4. Monitor the media where the County advertises and solicits bids such as *The Austin Chronicle*, *La Prensa*, *The Villager*, the bulletin board outside the Purchasing Office, and the Travis County Purchasing website: [www.co.travis.tx.us/departments/purchasing.htm](http://www.co.travis.tx.us/departments/purchasing.htm).
5. Attend pre-bid and pre-proposal meetings.
6. In order to truly play the game and be considered for business, you must bid!

of Texas, City of Austin and/or Capital Metro.

Jerome also serves as a member of the County's HUB Executive Committee, which is devoted to fostering the use of minority and woman-owned businesses in the procurement process. Jerome's advice to HUBs looking to do business with the County is to come and get it.

"You can just stand outside the fence and look in, or you can put your boots on and come in the gate. You may not win the first, second, or tenth time you bid, but you must be persistent. Figure out why you didn't win; that's what the primes do." •

Special thanks to all  
Purchasing Liaisons  
for your support  
in FY 2000!

## Let It Be Known

By Jorge Talavera

2001 brings new challenges and opportunities for the Purchasing Office and many new faces as well. Here are a few of our newest colleagues that we would like to welcome aboard. Look for them in future "In the Spotlight" articles.

**Don Rollack** became our newest *Contract Manager* on December 1, 2000, bringing with him extensive experience he gained during his service in the US Army.

**Ella Hill** began December 18<sup>th</sup> as a *Buyer I*. She is a temporary employee who is working in place of **Joanna Demopoulos**, who gave birth to twin girls on December 14, 2000.

**Lori Clyde** also started a week before Christmas. She is Purchasing's newest *Buyer III*, coming from Houston, where she worked for Harris County Purchasing for seven years. She replaced **Toby Fariss**, who left the Purchasing Office on December 14, 2000, to join the ranks of the Travis County Justice and Public Safety Division.

The Historically Underutilized Business Office has added a new full-time employee, approved in November by the Travis County Commissioner's Court. I am the first *HUB Specialist* to assist Sylvia Lopez, the Travis County HUB Coordinator.

**Donna Scarbrough** has come on board as our new *Assistant Purchasing Agent*. No stranger to the County, she has worked in the Sheriff's Office, the PBO and the County Auditor's Office for a total of eight years.

To all new employees, welcome aboard and best of luck to you all. •

In upcoming editions we will feature answers to frequently asked questions. Please submit questions regarding Travis County procurement to [Jorge.Talavera@co.travis.tx.us](mailto:Jorge.Talavera@co.travis.tx.us).

# H E L P F U L   T I P S   F O R   E V E R Y O N E

By Michael Carmona

The Commodity Code Catalogue last issued in 1994 is outdated. But did you know that you can view the latest commodity and sub-commodity codes on HTE? From the Purchasing and Inventory Main menu, press 11 for Custom Options, and note Options 16 through 19.

You may select Option 16 to make a general inquiry then browse a list of codes by pressing F4 if you don't already know the commodity or sub-commodity you need to find.

Use Option 17 to produce an on-screen Commodity/ Sub-commodity Description Cross Reference. Be sure to follow the example towards the bottom of the screen for best results. You must enclose your search word within single quotes, and the % signs are wildcards, meaning that HTE will search for words containing the text you type between the % signs.

Option 18 will also produce an on-screen Commodity Non-Capital Items report, but based on the Element Object you supply.

Option 19 generates an on-screen Commodity Capital Items report also based on the Element Object you supply. Remember that you can use the Page Down (PgDn) key to see more items if there is a + sign in the lower right corner of your screen.

For those of you who have been asking about how to check the status of a requisition, here are three ways to do this:

From the Purchasing Main Menu, first select 11, Custom Options. Then select Option 13, Requisition Inquiry. Enter your requisition number, then press the Field Exit key after you type your number (this is the same as the + key on the numeric keypad) then

press Enter. If you don't know the requisition number, press F17 (Shift and F5 together) to enter search criteria in any of the spaces presented to you. Where indicated, you may also press F4 to pull up a list of choices from which to select.

Or, from the Purchasing Main Menu, select 2, Inquiry, then select Option 7, Requisitions. This is very similar to the above procedure from Custom Options.

You may also review a requisition by selecting Option 4, Purchasing/ Receiving Menu, from the Purchasing Main Menu. Use Option 13, Requisition Inquiry, and follow the same procedure outlined above.

*An Important Note:* Be advised that if you try to check on the requisition by using the *Requisition Entry* option from the Main Purchasing and Receiving Menu, you run the risk of pulling your requisition back to your side, even if it has already been approved. This could cause your Requisition processing to be delayed. •

## Purchasing Staff Phone List

Purchasing Agent	Cyd Grimes	473-9761
P.A.'s Executive Assistant	Lana Boling	473-9766
Asst. Purchasing Agent	Frank Holder	473-9451
Asst. Purchasing Agent	Donna Scarbrough	473-9764
Business Sys. Consultant	Michael Carmona	708-4851
HUB Coordinator	Sylvia Lopez	708-4561
HUB Specialist	Jorge Talavera	2058
Buyer III	Lolly Jones	473-4204
Buyer III	Jerome Pilgrim	708-4429
Buyer III	Lori Clyde	473-4205
Buyer III	Rose Garcia	473-9763
Buyer II	Loren Breland	708-4854
Buyer II	Richard Villareal	708-4881
Buyer II	Manuel Perez	473-9762
Buyer I	Ella Hill	708-4853
Contract Manager	Donald Rollack	473-9760
Contract Manager	Vacant	708-4562
Contract Manager	Lou Britt	708-4852
Purchasing Clerk IV	Melissa Hanson	3705
Purchasing Clerk III	John Gonzalez	3702
Purchasing Clerk III	Elsa Uresti	3703
Purchasing Clerk II	Betty Chapa	5437
Fixed Asset Manager	Eddie Dubord	236-6459
Asst. Fixed Asset Manager	Ron Dube	236-6458
Const. Procumt. Specialist	Marvin Brice	473-9765
Const. Procumt. Specialist	Jerry Raisch	473-9724
Const. Procumt. Specialist	David Moreno	708-4850

## Special Events Calendar

**HUB Construction Economic Opportunity Forum**  
February 13, 2001

8:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m., Arlington  
UT Arlington, E.H. Hereford  
University Center, 301 W. 1<sup>st</sup> St.  
For more information contact:  
(817)272-2140

**Minority Business Enterprise Public Policy Day**  
February 27, 2001

9:15 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Austin  
Capitol Extension Auditorium and  
Luncheon at Hyatt Regency  
For more information contact:  
Carmen Garcia at (214) 969-0354

**EXPOsure**  
HUB After Hours Meet and Greet  
March 8, 2001

5:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m., Waco  
Texas State Technical College  
Waco

Student Services Center  
3801 Campus Drive  
For more information call:  
Jennifer Flores at (512)463-6958

**Dallas Fort Worth Minority Business Development Hard Hat 2000 Trade Show**  
“The Use of Technology in the Construction Industry”  
March 27, 2001

6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m., Dallas  
Eddie Dean's Ranch in  
Downtown Dallas  
944 South Lamar

For more information call:  
Bill Hunter at (214) 630-0747





Clockwise from left: Commissioner Ron Davis addresses the mini forum crowd; networking session between Buyers and vendors; Commissioner Davis totes his new fishing hat and fillet set with Cyd Grimes, Travis County Purchasing Agent, left, and Sylvia Lopez, Travis County HUB Coordinator; Juan Campos, Media Services, hard at work setting up to videotape the forum.

## NOTEWORTHY...

The results are in for **Purchasing's 2000 Customer Satisfaction Survey**, showing the highest level of satisfaction in five years. Out of the 245 respondents, 237, or 97 percent, were satisfied in their experience with the Purchasing Office, while eight respondents, or three percent, were dissatisfied. •

As the Travis County Purchasing Office continues to strive toward its 30% HUB goal, progress continues to be made with the highest HUB utilization since 1996 in fiscal year 2000. In FY 2000, Travis County's total expenditures were \$106,770,179, with \$15,486,672, or 14.5 percent spent with certified HUBs.

Another \$1,820,714, or 1.71 percent, was spent with non-certified or pending status minority/woman-owned businesses, bringing the overall minority/woman expenditures to \$17,307,386 or 16.21 percent.

**Non-certified businesses** are those that identified themselves as woman or minority-owned businesses, but that selected not to certify with the State of Texas, City of Austin or Capital Metro. **Pending certification** businesses are those businesses whose certifications are on hold due to any number of reasons. Travis County strongly encourages HUBs to become certified with any of the above entities so that you are rightfully recognized as a HUB. •

## Suggestions?

The Travis County Purchasing Quarterly is a work in progress that will continue to grow and improve.

We are always open to your suggestions for improvement so please feel free to email

**Jorge.Talavera@co.travis.tx.us.**

We at the Travis County Purchasing Office are striving to improve our service to you. Please let us know how we can better serve you.

### Forum • Continued from Page 1

mini forum and I hope there will be many more, but it's all about you," Davis said to the vendors, "and how can we help you? That's the question that is going to take connectivity from all of us. It's not just a solo issue."

According to Commissioner Davis, "producing a better service" to the business community is the ultimate goal of the forums.

"It sounds real simple, but a lot of strategizing needs to take place," Davis said.

"By opening up this process, looking at how we can strategize with you, and looking at your recommendations, we can focus on how we can

enhance HUB participation with Travis County."

Commissioner Davis concluded his remarks by guaranteeing his commitment would last his entire tenure as commissioner and reiterating his stance.

"As long as I'm on the Commissioner's Court, I am going to make sure that we do a good job and that we do better than what we're doing now."

Stressing the importance of future forums, Davis said, "This is the first, the first of many."

"I'm looking for a significant improvement, but the significant improvement will have to come from these types of mini forums where we can get that input from you." •



**When visiting the Purchasing Office, to ensure that you are serviced efficiently, please stop at the front desk. All documents will be logged in, date stamped and distributed appropriately. If you need to speak with a staff member, someone in the Purchasing Office will be happy to assist you.**